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ARMED FORCES MEDICAL LIBRARY

NEWS

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ISSUED FROM THE OFFICE OF THE DIRECTOR

BUILDING CONSTRUCTION BILLS

On 20 April 1955 two bills were sent to the Congress seeking authority for $2,354,352,000 for military base construction. Of this amount, $164,288,000 is for building projects in the District of Columbia, Maryland and Virginia. The item of most interest to all friends of the Armed Forces Medical Library appears under Title II, Section 201, as follows:

> "National naval medical center, Bethesda, Maryland: Plans and specifications for the Armed Forces Medical Library, $350,000."

In the House of Representatives the bill is designated H. R. 5700 and was introduced by the Honorable Carl Vinson, Chairman of the House Committee on Armed Services. The identical bill in the Senate is designated S.1765 and was introduced by the Honorable Richard B. Russell, Chairman of the Senate Committee on Armed Services. It is expected that the two committees will complete hearings on the bills before the first of June.

MEETING OF AFML ADVISORY GROUP

The Armed Forces Medical Library Advisory Group held its third meeting of the current fiscal year at the Library on 29 April 1955. All members were present save Dr. Karl F. Meyer. Lt. Colonel Frank M. Townsend, MC, USAF, represented the U. S. Air Force for Brig. General Harold H. Twitchell. The Army's representative, Colonel Thair C. Rich, MC, having been reassigned to duty outside Washington, Colonel William S. Moore, MC, of the Medical Plans and Operations Division, has been appointed to complete his unexpired term, and was in attendance at this meeting. The Group welcomed as guests Dr. Worth B. Daniels, President of the Society of Medical Consultants to the Armed Forces; Dr. Benjamin Spector, Chairman of the FRIENDS of the AFML; Colonel Harold W. Jones, (retired), Director of the Army Medical Library 1936-1945, and Dr. Alan Gregg, Vice President of the Rockefeller Foundation.

Printing cost borne by the FRIENDS of the Armed Forces Medical Library.

The Advisory Group dispatched several items of old business, made brief tours of inspection of the Library, and during the remainder of the day concentrated on the matter of the Library's building program.

MOVING PROGRESS

During the last month great progress has been made in relocating the activities of the Library throughout the main building. All divisions have now completed their moves, except for the Reference Division; since the entire collection will be rearranged coincident with this latter move, we can claim to have reached only the half-way mark. The greater proportion of building refurbishment has been completed, but several months will probably elapse before we are completely settled. If, in the meantime, our interlibrary loan and photoduplication service requests are not handled as promptly as usual, we hope that the Library's users will bear with us during this readjustment period.

Stacks have been set up in the entire west wing of the building; suitable lighting for these areas is now being installed. During the rehabilitation of the basement, several historical landmarks of the Billings era have disappeared. Billings was especially interested in heating and ventilating problems, and this building was provided with large, square, brick chimneys which encroached on the floor area. When it was learned that these chimneys could be eliminated without affecting the present heating system they were removed, thus freeing considerable extra space for housing volumes. Billings would hardly know the old place now.

The Index Division, orphaned across Independence Avenue for the last several years, is now installed on the third floor. Binding and Art Sections have been moved to the first floor east wing, with administrative offices located along the first floor east front. Catalog and Acquisition Divisions occupy increased space in the old museum area on the second floor; the Monograph Section of the Index Division (formerly the Index-Catalogue Division) has the space formerly occupied by the Binding Section.

Escanaba and Tampa Halls, the temporary structures we have long occupied, will be vacated completely. Our History of Medicine Division will remain in Cleveland. For the next two years we will have breathing space and the chance to survive until a new building is erected.

STAFF AWARD

Miss Etta E. Christiansen of the Catalog Division has received a cash award from the Office of The Surgeon General for sustained superior performance of duty as a Slavic cataloger.

BINDING WAIVER

For a long time the Armed Forces Medical Library has tried to obtain a waiver which would allow the utilization of commercial binding facilities in lieu of those of the Government Printing Office. This waiver has now been received, and new binding arrangements will go into effect this month. Substantial savings are expected.

EXHIBIT

"Hospitals of the United States Government and of the District of Columbia" is the subject of the Library's exhibit for May. The observance of National Hospital Week and the celebration of the 100th anniversary of the founding of Saint Elizabeths Hospital in the District of Columbia during this month make the exhibit particularly appropriate. Past and present scenes of Army, Navy, Air Force and Veterans Administration hospitals are shown. Other hospitals in the District of Columbia included in the display are Freedmen's, Georgetown University and George Washington University hospitals.

Miss Helen H. Cambell selected the materials for display from the Library's Art Section; mounting and arrangement was done by Miss Frances Corrigan of the Duplicating Section.

BIOLOGICAL CHARACTERISTICS OF LIBRARY ECONOMY

The "biological curve" characteristics of many library activities are striking, as Dr. Ralph Shaw and others have pointed out. The difficulties inherent in the compilation of library statistics are also bothersome, as we remarked in the August 1954 issue of the NEWS, wherein we quoted Lord Kelvin and others on the subject.

Now comes the April issue of The Scientific Monthly, with an article by R. E. Blackwelder and L. E. Hoyme entitled "Statistics, Experiment, and the Future of Biology," in which Lord Kelvin is quoted and his words examined more closely. The harried librarian will profit from a perusal of this article; by occasionally substituting "bibliothecal" for "biological" he may gain, by analogy, added insight into some of the problems of his own professional area.

EDUCATION SURVEY

A recent survey of the educational background of staff members of the Armed Forces Medical Library has disclosed some interesting data. There are 99 members (44%) of the staff who hold a total of 188 degrees. There are 41 persons holding 2 degrees; 18 persons holding 3 degrees; 5 persons holding 4 degrees.

Degrees in Library Science are held by 51 employees; master's degrees in a subject field have been conferred on 26 employees, and 13 others hold degrees at the doctorate level. The staff includes three physicians, one dentist, one nurse, and one attorney. There are 90 staff positions (40%) which fall in the professional category; 87% of the professional group hold degrees.

It should be noted here that only those degrees already granted, as contrasted with degrees the granting of which may be imminent, were counted for the purposes of this survey. Similarly, some staff members have pursued and are pursuing extensive courses of study for which formal degrees are not given; the statistics do not reflect these additional factors.

MONTREAL VISIT

Lieutenant Colonel Frank B. Rogers spent 19 April 1955 at McGill University, Montreal, at a meeting of the Board of Curators of the Osler Library. Besides Dr. W. W. Francis, the Librarian, and Dr. Lloyd G. Stevenson, the Assistant Librarian, those in attendance were Dr. G. Lyman Duff, Dean of the Medical School; Dr. Wilder Penfield; Dr. H. E. McDermot; Dr. John F. Fulton, and Dr. Burton Chance.

ANNUAL REPORT

Copies of the Annual Report of the Armed Forces Medical Library for the Calendar Year 1954 have been distributed. There are a few copies remaining, which may be obtained by making request to the Director.

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